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WEEKLY VISITANT.

FOR OCTOBER 11.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 18, 1806.

MISCELLANY.

FROM THE PORT FOLIO.

THE LAY PREACHER.

"*And he sat down by a well. Now the Priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up, and helped them, and watered their flock.*"

In the juvenile days of Moses, that prophet, having unfortunately interfered in a quarrel between an Egyptian and a Jew, went into voluntary exile.—Provoked at the assassination of a subject, the reigning monarch sought to slay Moses, who fled from his wrath into the land of Midian. Here he took up his residence in the vicinity of a well, and led a sort of Hermit's life, "unknowing and unknown." By a glance at the history of pastoral ages, it will be seen that the task of drawing water, either for household purposes, or for the use of the fold, generally devolved upon women. The simplicity, the indolence, or the rudeness of the patriarchs caused them to forget that the obvious destination of the softer sex, was for lighter labour; and that men, as the natural guardians of females, should ever rescue their fair wards from ignominious thraldom. But the Priest of Midian, with all his learning, was, it seems, clownish and inattentive in this respect; for he suffers his whole family of girls to "draw water, and fill the troughs to water his flock." In those days, and in that arid region, reservoirs, wells, and cisterns attracted almost as great crowds as fashionable watering places have in times more modern, and in a climate less fiery. Indeed, throughout the East, wells were a kind of haunt; and at their margin were to be found pilgrims and patriarchs, shepherds and herdsmen, blushing beauties and clamorous boors, all eager to allay their own thirst, or that of the animals, lowing and bleating around.—In such a promiscuous crowd, grossness and incivility would always mingle, perhaps predominate; and not only delicate ears, but even graceful forms would sometimes be wound-

ed. The daughters of the Priest did not repair to the well of Midian, without exposure to the attacks of brutality. Certain shepherds of the country, "*fellows* of the *baser* sort," influenced by their wonted churlishness, impudence, boorishness, and ferocity, came and drove these unoffending females away. Perceiving this harshness, and, in a spirit of gallantry, resenting it, Moses, with the courtesy of a *Cavalier*, quitted his seat and his meditations, civilly helped the insulted maidens, and relieved them from the labour of watering their flocks. This is a pleasing instance of primæval politeness, and demonstrates that even in the simplest stages of society, the man of feeling, taste, and judgment, will always support the rights of woman.

The sex have a paramount claim to our protection, tenderness, and courtesy. Years cannot cause my dim eyes to survey the fair carelessly, or with indifference. My heart still palpitates at their approach, and in despite of the discipline of Philosophy, my nerves vibrate, like the keys of a harpsiahord, from the slightest touch of a charmer. Once in the absurd misapprehension of youth, I thought the character of a woman-hater worth imitating, and even attempted to hurl a feeble lance at the daughters of Eve. But Time has taught me the impolicy and baseness of such a warfare. I have not only made a truce, but concluded a firm and lasting peace with the ladies. I pride myself that they still admit an old bachelor to their toilets, and that they will not refuse a dropped fan, though presented to them by a grey-headed gallant. If I hear the pleasing rustle of silk against my study stairs, I make shift to hide my spectacles, and at the expence of my gouty limbs, cheerfully resign my obsolete arm chair to the occupancy of the fair sex. I am a very Moses to resent any ill treatment they may receive; and did modern ladies watch and water sheep, like the seven shepherdesses of Midian, I am sure I should "right merrily" fill the bucket.

The gallantry of the attentive Moses was not unrequited. It procured him an invitation to the house of the priest, whose daughters had been thus protected by the shield of civility. The fruits of good breeding were the gratitude of a venerable divine and the hand of Zipporah his daughter.

Thus it may be learned by every young man, eager for a pleasant passage through life, that attention to women honours both the giver and the receiver. Nothing is to be gained by rudeness to the sex. By complaisance to them much may be acquired. He who is universally decried by women, is rarely very popular in male society. Nature intended the two sexes should live together in amity. Let the good understanding continue. If we treat our female friends with courtesy, and with tenderness, if we listen to their voice with attention, bow at their approach, and sigh at their departure, we shall be liberally remunerated. Selfishness alone will dictate such politeness. Woman, naturally frank, generous and sensitive, will hasten to discharge the obligation. On him who is thus watchful to please her, she will smile with radiance, she will

smooth his pillow, she will, like Hotspur's consort, "sing the song that pleases him," and "bind his aching head with flowers."

CRITICISM.

FROM THE ALBANY CENTINEL.

WEBSTER's DICTIONARY.

The preface to this work displays an extent of erudition rare in this, and which would be deemed respectable in any country. The writer seems to have prepared himself for his task by a thorough investigation of the history and structure of the English language, and long and patient study of general philology. That such learning and diligence should be employed, not to fix and settle, but to destroy the uniformity of our language, to legalize its corruptions and perversions, to deprive and degrade it, will be lamented by those who venerate English literature, and respect uncommon industry of research and extent of knowledge.

Mr. Webster treats his subject under the several heads of *Orthography*, *Pronunciation*, and *Etymology*.

In his adjustment of Orthography he has ventured on many alterations, and proposes others which are not inserted in his Dictionary. Some of his notions of improvement are visionary, and the changes he would make are too great to be soon or generally adopted. He aims at an orthography more accordant with the etymology, analogy, and pronunciation of the language. But who will eradicate all its anomalies and irregularities? Should a Legislature of Lexicographers, with powers to coerce rebellion, to subdue the force of habit, and prevent the effects of ignorance and negligence, legalize the corrections proposed by Mr. Webster, and declare that they should be at once adopted wherever the English language is written, it must be acknowledged that it would have a more uniform and pleasing aspect.

To Mr. Webster's scheme of Orthographical improvement, the following observations of Dr. Johnson furnish a sufficient objection. In the preface to his Dictionary, speaking of Orthography, he says :—"In this part of the work where caprice has long wantoned without controul, and vanity sought praise by petty reformation, I have endeavored to proceed with a scholar's reverence for antiquity and a grammarian's regard to the genius of our tongue. I have attempted few alterations, and among those few, perhaps the greater part is from the modern to the ancient practice ; and I hope I may be allowed to recommend to those whose thoughts have been perhaps employed too anxiously on verbal singularities, not to disturb, upon narrow views, or for minute propriety the orthography of their fathers. It has been asserted that for the law to be *known*, is of more importance than to be *right*. Change, says *Hooker*, is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better. There is in constancy and stability a general and lasting advantage, which will always overbalance the slow improvement of gradual correction."

The greater part of Mr. Webster's observations on *pronunciation* is certainly sensible and judicious. As far as his opinions can be gathered from

the preface, I do not see that he objects to Mr. Walker's pronunciation, but when it is absolutely absurd, or its propriety at least questionable. That writer's *acceptable*, and *commendable*, with the accents on the first syllable, are wholly indefensible. *Parsheality*, *ingrasheate*, *offisheate*, &c. are of dubious propriety. *Ske-y*, *ke-ind*, *gue-ise*, *disgue-ise*, &c. Mr. Webster considers as precisely the faults which distinguish the vulgar of New-England in ke-ow, ge-own, &c. *Ancgel* and *anecient*, though contrary to analogy, are so firmly established in England and in this country, excepting some parts of New-England, that the attempt to change them must be fruitless.

Under the head of Etymology, Mr. Webster shews a profundity of learning, an acquaintance with the origin and sources of our language and its sister tongues, in which few have surpassed him. This is his favorite walk, and he seems to have cultivated it with diligence and rare and honorable success.

A great part of his preface may be read with pleasure and advantage by the scholar and lover of literature.—Yet from this praise much must be detracted. Such is Mr. Webster's disposition to revolutionize and disorganize the English language; so enamaured is he of *dialects*, the offspring of the *English* of *Old England*; so filled is his imagination with the future prevalence and glory of *the dialect of the United States*, of *American English*; that sober and judicious men, who are disposed to go "*super antiquas vias*," and to preserve the uniformity and stability of the English tongue, will lament that learning and talents so respectable should be the auxiliaries of a taste so false, and a judgment so perverse.

Is it not madness to endeavor to establish, not only an *American* or *United States' dialect*, the eldest and proudest daughter of the old mother *English*, but a Connecticut, a Massachusetts, a Vermont, and a Pennsylvania dialect? Mr. Webster does not indeed speak in terms of any dialect to prevail in this country, but the United States or American. But when he tells us, that a word, which is a *noun* according to English grammar, is a *verb* in some of the States; that a man may be *fourfolded* in Connecticut and *defaulted* in some other State; that *authority* in Connecticut and *association* in Massachusetts have local meanings; that a word, the sign of one idea in one State, means something more or different in another; that *turnpike* signifies "a *road* on which a turnpike is erected;" we see the extent of his efforts and hopes. Besides all this we are told that his Dictionary contains more than five thousand words not found in other compends; among which, that the classical reader of Queen Elizabeth's English may not remain ignorant of the American language, he will find such words as *caucus*, *chore*, *petitionee*, &c.

If all the corruptions, perversions, barbarisms, provincial words and phrases, which exist in the United States, are to be recognized by lexicographers and treated as legitimate words of the language of the nation, we shall soon have dialects equal in number to those of that long catalogue which the names of Mohawk, Seneca, Chipeway, and Choctaw contribute to compose.

To this glorious state of things Mr. Webster must have looked with ardent and anxious expectation, when he inserted so many elegant new words, so many convenient perversions and corruptions of old English, in his "Compendiuous Dictionary of the English Language."

Mr. Walker in his Pronouncing Dictionary might have given us the Yorkshire, the Northumberland, and the Cockney pronunciation with as much propriety as Mr. Webster has introduced the varirus corrupt senses of an English word in different States.

To new words, the signs of new ideas, perhaps no reasonable objection can be made. Let the farmer *girdle* his trees, and the planter *gin* his cotton. But when words have been detorted from their original meaning, and the sense in which the best writers and speakers have used them, it is the duty of the maker of a Dictionary to endeavour to restore them to their original sense, and legitimate use; and thus contribute his efforts to preserve the uniformity and to secure the stability and longevity of the language. To promote which important objects, literary men should combine their zeal and exertions. The wonderful diffusion of the English language is a subject of grateful and sublime contemplation. The mind is filled and expended with the thought, that the diction of Locke and Milton, Chatham and Burke, will be written and spoken for ages to come in the British Isles, on the banks of the Ganges and the Missisippi—will be diffused over the great Peninsula of India and a vast portion of the American continent. To the advantage resulting from the immense predominance of such a language—a language which is the vehicle of all the knowledge the human mind has attained, the scheme of dialects is extremely hostile. But it is a visionary scheme. A *written* tongue, which has been the medium of so much original genius, which describes all the sentiments and passions, and communicates all the science of man, will not easily ramify into dialects.

Believing that this Dictionary was intended by its author to promote his favourite project, *an American language*, I cannot but hope that it will be excluded from all colleges, schools and seminaries of learning; that it will be opposed by all that is correct in taste, and respectable in literature; by the acuteness of criticism, and the poignancy of ridicule. C.

SELECTED POETRY.

A BALLAD.

By Richard Edwards, who died in 1566.

In going to my naked bed as one that would have slept,
I heard a wife sing to her child, that long before had wept.
She sighed sore, and sang full sweet, to bring the babe to rest,
That would not cease, but cried still, in sucking at her breast.
She was full weary of her watch, and grieved with her child,
She rocked it, and rated it, until on her it smil'd;
Then did she say, 'Now have I found the proverb true to prove,
'The falling out of faithful friends renewing is of love.'

Then took I paper, pen, and ink, this proverb for to write,
In register for to remain of such a worthy wight.
As she proceeded thus in song unto her little brat,
Much matter utter'd she of weight in place whereas she sat;
And proved plain, there was no beast, nor creature bearing life
Could well be known to live in love without discord and strife:
Then kissed she her little babe, and sware by God above,
'The falling out of faithful friends renewing is of love.'

'I marvel much, pardie,' quoth she, 'for to behold the rout,
To see man, woman, boy and beast, to toss the world about ; [ly smile,
Some kneel, some crouch, some beck, some check, and some can smooth-
And some embrace others in arms, and there think many a wile,
Some stand aloof at cap and knee, some humble and some stout,
Yet are they never friends indeed untill they once fall out.'
Thus ended she her song, and said, before she did remove,
'The falling out of faithful friends renewing is of love.'

THE EMIGRANT'S GRAVE.

Founded on a true Story, by W. Spencer, Esq.

Why mourn ye, why strew ye these flow'rets around,
To yon new-sodded grave, as your slow steps advance ?
In yon new-sodded grave, (ever dear be the ground !)
Lies the stranger we lov'd, the poor exile from France.

And is this the poor exile at rest from his woe,
No longer the sport of misfortune and chance ?
Mourn on, village mourners, my tears too shall flow
For the stranger ye lov'd, the poor exile of France.

Oh ! kind was his nature, though bitter his fate,
And gay was his converse, though broken his heart ;
No comfort, no hope, his own heart could elate,
Though comfort and hope he to all could impart.

Ever joyless himself, in the joys of the plain
Still foremost was he, mirth and pleasure to raise,
And sad was his soul, yet how blithe was his strain,
When he sung the glad song of more fortunate days !

One pleasure he knew ; in his straw cover'd shed
For the snow-beaten beggar his faggot to trim :
One tear of delight he could drop on the bread
Which he shar'd with the poor, though still poorer than him.

And when round his death-bed profusely we cast
Ev'ry gift, ev'ry solace our hamlet could bring,
He blest us with sighs, which we thought were his last ;
But he still had a pray'r for his country and king.

Poor exile, adieu ! undisturb'd be thy sleep !
From the feast, from the wake, from the village green dance,
How oft shall we wander by moonlight to weep
O'er the stranger we lov'd, the poor exile from France.

To the church going bride shall thy mem'ry impart
One pang as her eyes to thy cold relics glance,
One flow'r from her garland, one tear from her heart,
Shall drop on the grave of the exile of France.

DIRECTIONS TO A PORTER.

Anonymous.

Thou faithful guardian of these peaceful walls,
Whose zealous care protects thy master's gate ;
If any stranger at this mansion calls,
I'll tell thee who shall enter, who shall wait.

If Fortune, blindfold gooddess, chance to knock,
Or proud Ambition lure me to her arms,
Shut, shut the door, good John, quick turn the lock,
And shield thy master from their syren charms.

Steal not this Book for fear of

If sober Wisdom hither deigns to roam,
Nor let her in, nor send her quite away:
Tell her, at present I am not at home,
But hope she'll call again another day!

If at my door a beauteous boy be seen,
His little feet have oft my threshold trod,
You know the offspring of the Cyprian Queen,
His air—without his bow, bespeak the god.

His gentle smiles admittance ever win,
Though oft deceiv'd— I prize the fond deluder;
Morn, noon, and night, be sure you let him in,
For Love, dear Love, is never an intruder.

RICARDO'S FATE.

A pensive and pathetic Piece.

Cheerless and sad appears the gloomy sky;
No sound was heard but what the screech-owl gave;
Demons of darkness seem'd to hover nigh;
Then all was still, and silent as the grave!
Ricardo now pursued his dismal road
From the bright region of his cottage fire;
Down a dark passage near his lov'd abode,
Cautious he trod, while fear his thoughts inspire:
No welcome gleam across his pathway shone,
But soon an obstacle impedes his way—
Where, with a faint and sadly-sounding groan,
Headlong he fell, stretch'd out upon the clay;
And as he rose, he roar'd with ghastly grin,
"D—mn—t—n seize the pail! I've broke my shin!"

MISCELLANEOUS.

ON CARD PLAYING.

"Cards are superfluous—with all the tricks
"That idleness has ever yet contrived
"To fill the void of an unfurnished brain,
"To palliate dulness, and give time a shove." COWPER.

A Gentleman in public company, inveighing against the prevailing custom of Card Playing, was requested to give his reasons for it, which he did in words to this effect, I will, said he, since you desire it, give you my reasons; first, in general, and then, in particular. I have observed that cards waste a great deal of TIME, which I esteem the most valuable treasure that God hath bestowed on us: In the next place, they exclude conversation which is the highest of all social pleasures; and lastly, they too frequently excite envy, repining, and ill humor. To be more particular.—In young persons, the habit of playing at Cards absorbs many of those hours which should be spent in improving the mind, and which, thus daily wasted, can never afterwards be recalled: by thus losing the opportunity of improvement, they become utterly unfit for proper employments, and of course fall into pursuits, unworthy of the stations they might have filled, and become insignificant to themselves and useless to society. With respect to the OLD: This humor of Card playing is a most wretched example, and contributes greatly to ruin the rising generation: it removes that reverence which ought naturally to wait upon years, and renders that season of life disgraceful, which ought to be the object of veneration: It increases avarice, the too natural vice of AGE, and corrupts the heart, at a season, when it should be employed in more serious

pursuits. In a word, this is one great cause of that incapacity so justly deplored in our YOUTH of both sexes, and of that profligacy, which disgraces those in ADVANCED YEARS.

A PICTURE.

Her very appearance was sufficient to silence the severest satirist of her sex; easy without pride, and free without impudence——her looks, her conversation were natural and unconstrained; she had neither been taught to languish nor ogle, to laugh without a jest, or to sigh without sorrow.

Goldsmith.

Serenity, health, and affluence attend the desire of rising by labor; misery and disrespect that of succeeding by extorted benevolence: the man, who can (under Providence) thank himself alone for the happiness he enjoys, is truly blest; and lovely, far more lovely, the sturdy gloom of laborious indigence, than the fawning simper of thriving adulation. *ibid.*

BAD WEATHER OUT-RIDDEN.

A gentleman riding from Dartford to London, saw behind him a great shower of rain, and several travellers, all great-coated and wet through.—He now put on briskly, and out-rode the shower all the way, so that by the time he got to Shooter's-hill, it had only reached his horse's tail, and so continued till he got to London, he not being in the least wet by it.

A person speaking very respectfully of a blind gentleman, said among other things, that he was a *good looking man.* An Hibernian in company struck with the apparent blunder, exclaimed, "By the holy Shannon, if I had said as much, I should have been accused of making a bull.—How can any one be a *good looking* man when he is so stark blind that he can't *look* at all.

CAUTION.

On Saturday evening last, some incendiary threw a lighted cigar into the window of a small bedroom of Mr. A. Upton, corner of Essex and Beckford streets, which set on fire some light cotton articles lying upon a table. Fortunately Mrs. Upton being in an adjoining room, smelt the burning and made the discovery soon enough to subdue the fire.

On Sunday morning last, an earthern vessel containing tinder and other combustibles was found in Mess'rs J. & J. Henfield's yard, (Washington str.) near one corner of the house. It was supposed that some incendiary intended to set fire, but was alarmed, from hearing Mr. H. up in the house.

Had a fire obtained any considerable height, in either of the above mentioned places, the destruction of many houses and much property would have been the inevitable consequence.

MARRIAGE.

In this town, Mr. John Dileston, to Miss Hitty Masury.

DEATHS.

In this town, Miss Sally Phippen, aged 21, daughter of Capt. Nathaniel Phippen. Miss Lucy Saunders, aged 17, daughter of Capt. Thomas Saunders.

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